

RENT RIM BUGLE

Official Newsletter of the MMBA - Issue #71 - spring 05



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The Michigan Mountain Biking Association (MMBA) is a 501-(C)(3) non-profit organization. We have 1,600 members in nine chapters throughout Michigan. The mission of the MMBA is to promote responsible mountain biking and to work toward the goals of common land access and natural resource protection through interaction with policy makers, the cycling industry, race promoters, mountain bikers and other trail users.

The Bent Rim Bugle is published four times a year (March, June, Sept, Dec.) by the Michigan Mountain Biking Association and distributed to all members. It is made possible by volunteers and riders like you.

Bent Rim Bugle

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Letters/Comments/Submissions

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Visit the MMBA on the web, [new and improved site](#), for contact information and much more.

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Cover photo by Bryan Mitchell

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Fresh Dirt



"Who are you and what have you done with DAN?"

Hi there, glad you asked! My name is Mary Ann Martin and I was elected to the MMBA State Board President's position after the annual meeting. I've been a mountain biker since '94, an MMBA member since '99, and the Holly/Flint Chapter President since fall of 2003. I'm happy to report that Dan Harrison has moved into the VP position on the board and is continuing his valuable contributions to the organization and the workings of the State Board.

In my "State of the MMBA" articles here in BRB, I hope to make visible the happenings of the inner workings of the MMBA at the state level. Hopefully you'll see something here that interests you, something you or someone you know could help with, or some way you might like to get involved. If you want to get involved, and don't know where to start, check with your chapter for opportunities. If you can't find anything there, contact me and I'll do my best to get you lined up with the right group in the organization. There's a lot going on right now as the state organization resets itself for another step forward. Here's a look at two of the larger projects:

Improved member relations and communications:

When it comes to advocacy, numbers count; how many possible land users/voters back up our member's requests for more trails, better trails, and skills parks. The state Membership Committee was created last year with the goals to identify member benefits, identify membership building opportunities, and to identify and promote member activities, all to provide a more cohesive organization for all of our membership. The membership committee is currently working on promoting both social and advocacy activities for all members. If you have ideas for the membership committee, send them to me and I'll pass them along or drop them a note at: membership-com@mmba.org.

Growth and financial health of the MMBA:

In the financial arena the State Board has been looking at fees, bookkeeping options, accounting software and processes, and a more consolidated approach to the MMBA funds statewide. This is a huge job. I'm happy to report there's a very capable group of State Board members lead by our new Treasurer Shari Scurr planning our future in that area.

Along with the financial reorganization we will be reviewing, creating, and publishing realistic, sustainable long term organizational goals showing our current and future members exactly what will be happening with their membership dollars and how they can become involved in reaching those goals if they want to do so. These plans will be based on: improving access to trails, promoting responsible mountain biking, improving relations to other user groups, land managers, and lawmakers, increasing membership, and following a balanced budget. Our advocacy activities, financial stability, membership base, and marketing should all be connected towards the MMBA's original goal of protecting natural resources and creating better access to mountain bike trails in Michigan for all mountain bikers.

The trail ahead is interesting, but so is looking back once in a while. I'd like to thank Tom Nell for his many years of service to the MMBA and Dan Harrison for his two years as President. Thanks to everyone who came out for the annual meeting. Thanks to everyone who came out to work on trails this year. And Thanks to everyone who rode those trails we worked so hard on. Because that's why we're here: To continue to ride America's best trails, here in Michigan. See you on the trail! - Mary Ann Martin

News from the Executive Director – Todd Scott

Updates from the MMBA Office

MMBA Personnel Changes

Please help welcome the following folks to their new leadership roles within the MMBA:

Jeff Adamcik, Northeast Chapter President

Jake Pangle, Mid-State Chapter President

John Burt, Pontiac Lake Chapter President & CPS Dir.

Shari Scurr, Treasurer

Mary Ann Martin, President

DNR/NRTF Personnel Changes

Ron Olson is our new DNR Parks Bureau Chief. Ron was previously the head of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation. During his tenure in Ann Arbor, he and his staff worked with the MMBA to create the trail system at Northeast Park. William Moritz is the new chief of the DNR Wildlife Division, which manages State Game Areas. He served as assistant chief since February, 2003

There are two new additions to the Natural Resources Trust Fund (NRTF). This board is “responsible for the acquisition of lands for resource protection and public outdoor recreation. The board determines which lands and rights in land within the state should be acquired and which public recreation facilities should be developed with money from the trust fund.” Steven Hamp, president of The Henry Ford, succeeds Steven Arwood who has resigned to lead the Heart of the Lakes Center for Land Conservancy. Lana Pollack, president of the Michigan Environmental Council (MEC), is replacing another MEC’er David Dempsey who recently moved to Minnesota. The MMBA is an active MEC member.

MMBA on New DNR Committee

DNR Director Rebecca Humphries appointed me to the new Citizens Committee for State Parks, an advisory committee created by legislation which the Governor signed into law last year. The committee will ensure the public has a voice in the operations, planning and development of Michigan’s state park system.

“The governor’s vision is to have the members focus on the over-reaching mission to ensure the parks and recreation system remains balanced and endures for future generations to enjoy,” Humphries said. “In light of the \$1.5 million structural deficit currently facing Michigan’s state parks, the DNR welcomes the committee’s advice in areas of revenue enhancement and in making sure that programs and services are in place to keep our state parks a world-class resource for our residents and visitors to enjoy a quality outdoor recreation experience.”

DNR Updates Event Policies

We’ve been working with the DNR to help them consolidate their commercial operations process into one simpler, easier to enforce process across all DNR divisions.

This will cover events, leases, and concessions. We’ve reviewed their draft process and made numerous comments to make sure mountain biking events (e.g. trail work days, group rides, and races) continue to have balanced access to our state lands.

DNR Trail Moratorium

The DNR Parks if lifting the new trail moratorium at parks once their management plans get completed. A handful of management plans were completed last year, including Ionia’s. This year plans are underway at the Pontiac Lake, Pinckney, Waterloo, Brighton, and Fort Custer State Recreation Areas – all parks with strong mountain bike use or interest. “We are looking forward to MMBA participation in our efforts,” adds Paul Curtis, the DNR Park Management Plan Administrator.

MDOT Forms Non-Motorized Committee

The M-DOT Metro region (St. Clair, Macomb, Oakland and Wayne Counties) has created a new Non-Motorized Advisory Committee. The MMBA has a seat on this new committee and looks forward to helping M-DOT accommodate biking and trails throughout the region. It’s also rather symbolic that such a committee is being created 100 years after M-DOT was formed—by a cyclist.

Legislative Updates

On January 3rd, Governor Granholm signed a bill to reduce the DNR and NRTF’s tax burden. It’s not exactly what we asked for, but it’s a step in the right direction. This means the Trust Fund should have more money available for buying land. It also means there’s less pressure on the DNR to lease or sell their land in order to reduce their tax burden. We’re continuing to work with Senator McManus on updating Michigan’s road laws with respect to cycling. By early summer we hope to introduce legislation that brings these laws inline with the latest national guidelines for safe cycling on our roads. We’re also working with Senator Bishop’s staff on legislation for an optional trail pass concept. As it stands now, such a trail pass would raise money only for designated Michigan Trailways (typically rail-trails.) We have concerns with the legislation as it’s currently proposed since it doesn’t address some of the bigger trail funding issues at our state parks, game areas, and forests.

At the federal level, President Bush’s proposed fiscal year 2006 budget eliminates funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The LWCF was created in 1964 and is funded (in theory) by the sale of surplus Federal real property, motorboat fuel taxes, Federal recreation use fees, and royalties from offshore oil drilling. Michigan received approximately \$2.5 million for LWCF in 2005. The MMBA will be joining others groups

calling on Congress to keep the LWCF intact.

North Country Trail Update

The NCTA Spirit of the Woods Chapter was looking to bring in groups of people to work on specific projects within the Huron-Manistee National Forest.

According to the chapter, "This segment of the NCT has been without proper regular maintenance for many years. Our chapter was formed in 1998 and we are playing catch up and doing a decent job but we'd like faster results in a shorter time!"

"If a barber shop quartet was willing to learn, follow direction and take supervision as well as camp three nights in the forest, I'd talk to them," the chapter said.

We contacted them in hopes of partnering on some trail work since this part of the NCT is very popular with mountain bikers and we have many new graduates of our REI/MMBA Trail Building School.

Unfortunately, the Spirit of the Woods appreciated yet declined our offer because their vision for the trail hiking-only. We'll keep our offer on the table and hopefully they'll eventually see the benefit in working with us.

There's not much else we can do.

Detroit Trails Get a Boost

Thanks to the Corradino's for their recent \$1,000 donation towards building mountain bike trails within the City of Detroit. Thanks also go to Harvey Santana for helping make this happen.

Lumber Donated to Novi Bridge

The MMBA gives big thanks to Ministry Contracting L.L.C. for donating \$1,300 worth of pressure-treated lumber to the MMBA Southeast Chapter. This is going to help the Chapter build a large portion of the final bridge at Novi's Lakeshore Park.

If you have any sizeable amount of lumber you'd wish to donate, please contact us. We have additional needs at Stony Creek, Ruby Campgrounds, and at other trails across the state. Of course, the MMBA is a 501©(3) non-profit so these donations are tax deductible.

Michigan Gets a B+

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) released their annual state grades report and has given Michigan a B+ score, which again puts us near the top. The IMBA state grades are based on many factors, including "the strength of local organizations, percent of trails open to riding, relations with land managers, and other groups, and threats to access." West Virginia took the top honors this year. Michigan was the second highest state in the "People's Choice" based on an on-line poll.

Addison Oaks Update

We'd heard rumors that new equestrian trails at Addison Oaks meant we'd be losing significant stretches of single-

track. We set up a meeting with Oakland County Parks and the equestrian groups to discuss this. We're happy to report there will be no loss of single-track for mountain biking. The equestrians will be on separate two-track on newly acquired farm land in an area southwest of the entrance. We asked about adding optional technical challenges along the existing trail as well as improved signage. Oakland County Parks was receptive to both ideas. Also, our Addison trail coordinator and longtime volunteer Paul Bailey received a Community Service Award from the Michigan Recreation and Parks Association (MRPA). Paul was nominated by Oakland County Park. Paul's put in 1,100 hours on the trail so far with 514 hours in 2004 alone. Congratulations, Paul!

MMBA Annual Expo

Thanks to everyone who attended, exhibited, and volunteered for this successful event. Since then our guest speaker, Mike Curiak has won the 350-mile Alaska Iditarod Invitational in an unofficial record time of three days and six hours. Congratulations Mike!

MMBA Wins Web Site Award

The MMBA recently won an award for best 'Education and trails training site' in the 2004 American Trails Web-site Contest. The contest highlights web sites that "really make trails come alive, and provide effective information delivery, support volunteers, and engage the public." More MMBA web site improvements are underway for 2005, including new on-line membership services.

Clinton River Trail Bridge

This question is asked often: When is that trail bridge getting built over the Clinton River behind Rochester College? The answer is this summer according to Mike Hartner, Rochester Hill's director of parks and forestry. This bridge will make it much easier for many folks riding to Bloomer Park and Stony Creek.

Wayne County Parks

The MMBA recently submitted comments on Wayne County Park's Master Plan. We noted that Oakland County has about 85 miles of single-track, whereas Wayne County has 5 miles. The MMBA wants to partner with Wayne County Parks to add more off-road biking opportunities within the county.

Boy Scout MTB Camp

We recently wrote a letter of support for the Boy Scouts of America's Eric Shores Council. They're applying for a grant to build a mountain bike camp at their Pioneer Scout Reservation near Hillsdale, Michigan. If they get the grant, they're interested in partnering with the MMBA and opening the facilities to our members when they're available.

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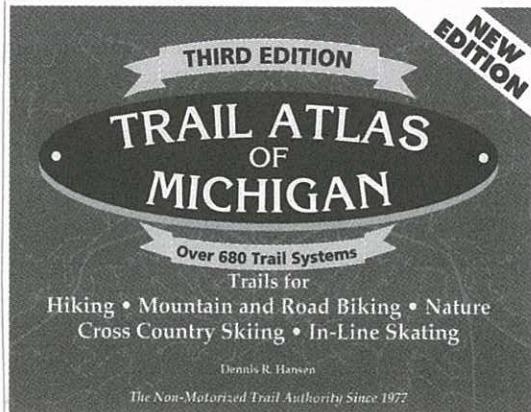
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Presented by Fox, NiteRider and Rocky Mountain Bicycles.

Three ride choices: One day ride / two day ride / short partial ride. The one-day ride will do the entire 80 miles in one day, approximately 14 hours (11 hours in saddle). The two-day ride will break the 80 miles in to two 7-hour days. Warning to riders, these rides are very strenuous. The short partial ride will be on the Shingle Mill Pathway for those who aren't as ambitious but still want to enjoy the Pigeon River Forest. The Shingle Mill Pathway forms part of the HCP but has choices with loops of 1 mile / 2 miles / 6 miles / 10 miles / and 11 miles.

For more information contact Dan (231) 779-1461 or send an email to: northern@mmba.org or go to <http://www.mmmba.org/northern/summer-solstice-ride.html>

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State Lands and Trail Funding Under Attack

Comben vs. State of Michigan

The MMBA has joined the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC), Heart of the Lakes Center for Land Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, Michigan Environmental Council, Michigan Recreation and Park Association and Michigan Municipal League to petition the Supreme Court to resolve the issues raised by the Comben Case. Former MMBA President Dan Harrison filed the amicus brief outlining how critical this case is to mountain bikers and other park/trail users throughout Michigan. The Michigan Supreme Court is our last chance to overturn the Comben decision.

What is the Comben court decision? From the MUCC:

"This complicated decision is based upon land transactions dating back to statehood. Our state forests, state parks and wildlife areas are largely comprised of lands that were acquired through the tax reversion (i.e. foreclosure) process. The state through the instruction of the legislature retained the mineral rights to the properties that it received through the tax reversion process even when the surface rights were sold. These minerals rights were leased for oil and gas development. The royalties from these leases flowed into the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and the State Park Endowment Fund. Almost one billion dollars have flowed into these funds since their creation and in turn have been granted to local communities and the state for land acquisition and park development.

"The Appeals Court decision brings into question the state's right to obtain oil and gas rights through the tax foreclosure process. The plaintiffs' claim those cannot be lost through tax foreclosure – and that the court should order the state to deed back those rights and pay them all royalties the state has received on those properties.

Ex Director update - continued

Howell Freeride Trail Cancelled

We got word from Task Force 1 that the landowner has had a change of plans and we'll be unable to build a trail this spring as planned. Unfortunately, these things happen.

Bloomer Race DVD Now Available

A new 30-minute DVD of the February Bloomer Park Paul Bunyan race is now available for \$19.95 (+\$1.50 shipping and handling) from Tenmile Media. Tenmile is generously donating \$4.00 to the MMBA for each buyer who mentions the MMBA in the "Message to Seller" section of the on-line order form at http://www.tenmilemedia.com/mountainbike_videos.htm

If the Appeals Court decision stands, it could cost Michigan's taxpayers hundred of millions of dollars. It could also potentially destroy the funds and result in the development of currently protected pristine areas of the state such as the Jordon River Valley, the Mason Tract on the AuSable River or our state parks."

Legislators Question Land Purchases

Recently the Natural Resources Trust Fund Board approved 15 land purchase projects (\$26.03 million in state funds) and 26 development projects (\$6.14 million). When these suggestions came through the joint capital outlay committee, legislators questioned the need to purchase more state land.

Representative John Pastor (R-Livonia) argued the Legislature recently called for a moratorium on new state land purchases.

Senator Shirley Johnson (R-Royal Oak) who chairs the committee agreed with the need to look at different ways to spend the trust fund money. She also noted that they should determine the required changes to the constitution.

Senator Alan Cropsey (R-DeWitt) argued that some of the trust fund money should be used for purchasing and decommissioning public dams around the state. "This would do more to help the natural environment than purchasing large tracts of land," he said.

The MMBA will stay on top of this issue to help protect the trust fund and make sure it continues to purchase valuable recreational lands across Michigan.

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Lunch at Legs / Ferry Crossing to Mackinac Island /
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Enjoy Historic Mackinac Island

Weekly Group Ride Locator:

We have some great open rides going on at our trails put on by chapter members, bike shops, cycling clubs, and other groups. Group rides are an excellent way to socialize and get to learn a new trail at the same time. Most rides start in April after the thaw, but some go year round. Check the MMBA online calendar and bulletin board for more information on the rides and check the online trail guide for trail location.

Trail	Day of the week and start time	Type of ride (no drop, split groups, fast)	Host/ Contact	Comments
Holdridge At Holly Recreation Area	Monday nights 3:30 pm	No drop, group ride emphasizing beginner and intermediate riders	Holly/Flint Chapter MMBA Contact: Dave Lidgey oldrhino47@aol.com	Rides will be starting after the thaw.
Lakeshore Park in Novi (AKA The Tree Farm) -	Tuesday nights 6:30pm	No-drop group ride - all skill levels	SE Chapter MMBA/ Team Tree Farm Contact: Dave Cox davecox2@mac.com	
Stony Creek	Wednesday nights Meet 6:30 at the Stony Creek High School 15min rule	No-drop group ride – agreed upon regroup points - all skill levels welcome	SE Chapter MMBA Contact: Mike Moss wingzz@ameritech.net 248-670-4553	Stony Creek High School is at the corner of Teinkin and Sheldon roads in Rochester, MI. Everyone is welcome.
Fort Custer Rec Area Augusta, MI	Thursday nights, 6:30 pm	Lead by Senior riders, pace is reduced to 10.5 mph average. Slower and faster riders sometimes split off. All riders are accounted for at rides end.	SW Chapter MMBA Contact: Michael J. Needham mneedham@tds.net	This ride goes year-round. Snowshoes or XC Skis used if snow too deep. Linear Path used if conditions are muddy.
Potawatomi	Thursday nights Meet at Silver Lake Parking Lot at 5:30pm ride starts at 6:00 pm	Split groups. Intermediate to advanced riding level.	Potawatomi Chapter Contact: Robert Hurley 734-667-3062	First ride mid April, ride all summer long

Copper Harbor	Thursday nights 6:00pm Meet at the Keweenaw Adventure Company in downtown Copper Harbor.	Most rides last 2-3 hours and are intermediate and advanced riders. Tours of the CH singletrack (about 20 miles) and the surrounding uninhabited backcountry of the tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula are highlighted.	www.keweenawadventure.com or (906) 289-4303 for more information	Copper Harbor group rides will commence on June 2 and will continue into the Fall. An après' ride session of food, drink and socializing traditionally follow at the Mariner North.
Burchfield	Burchfield and others. TBD	Weekly No-drop rides for all skill levels.	Midstate Chapter MMBA	These rides will be posted on the MMBA calendar and the Mid-state message board.

If you sponsor or know about a consistent weekly ride happening on a trail in your chapter and you don't see it here, please post it on the on-line calendar and also send a copy to: president@mmba.org and we can add it to the list.

Editors Note: For you racers there is a weekly Tuesday ride at Island Lake Rec Area dubbed the "Pain Train". The first half of the ride is on road bikes over to Kensington for 4-5 laps and then back to the IL trailhead grabbing mountain bikes for a fast off-road lap. Bring your legs and lungs because basically those riding the pain train try to kill each other, or at least drop who they can!

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2005 MMBA Championship Point Series



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State of the CPS

The starting line

As I sit at my keyboard thinking about how to write this, I wonder, why? Why do people put their busy lives on hold, leaving loved ones, meals, bills, lawns, laundry...behind to go out and inflict copious amounts of pain on themselves...for fun?

Then I think back to the last few summers where I have spent a good portion of my Sundays traipsing around the state chasing the CPS series. I cannot think of a more wholesome atmosphere that exists amongst the dust, sweat, chain lube and blood anywhere. I thank you all for improving my level of life. I would first like to applaud Shari Scurr for her years spent at the helm of the CPS ship. She brought an air of quality to the CPS events that increased the fun factor of our series and set into motion a lot of changes that will continue.

I thank the rest of the Competition Committee for their efforts to improve and grow the MMBA Championship Point Series. The positive attitude of all involved should be experienced at least once to be appreciated. Thank you all. It is the efforts of these volunteers, who meet once a month on their own nickel that brings you a stellar selection of races from several promoters for you to enjoy in 2005.

Lap 1-We've made some changes

For the 2005 season we have assembled a 10 race series. ONLY 10 races? Why? The answer is simple - with fewer races to attend, it allows you to ride a road century with your non racing friends and mow your lawn more often. If you have kids, you may remember that you have kids! We have set the Series awards eligibility qualifier to 6 races. We have set the maximum races for points to 8 events. Yes, that's right. 8 out of 10 races now count for points as opposed to 7 out of 13 in 2004. What will this accomplish? Every race CAN make a difference in the points chase. You may only do one or two more races than you did in years past, but those races will mean much more to your personal 2005 CPS season. Tighter, closer and better competition is the goal. Won't that be more fun? You are likely to line up to race more often and against more racers! I'm excited, I hope you are too!

Lap 2-Looking forward

The Competition Committee has always operated under the assumption that we went to work in October and completed our tasks sometime before the MMBA Annual Meeting. The fall of 2004 was no different until the members of the Competition Committee came to the conclusion that if the MMBA Championship Point Series is to grow and flourish- the task of running the series is a year round adventure.

As your Competition Committee negotiated with our potential promoters last fall, we also negotiated with potential sponsor for

Come out and Race!

For additional information: www.MMBA.org

2005 CPS Race Schedule

- 
- 4/17 Yankee Springs Deep Lake TT
 - 4/24 Cannonsburg Challenge
 - 5/1 Fort Custer Stampede XC
 - 5/22 Pontiac Lake TT **
 - 6/5 Hansen Hills Challenge
 - 7/10 Boyne Challenge
 - 7/31 Stony Creek TT
 - 9/18 Addison Oaks Fall Classic
 - 9/25 Pando Challenge
 - 10/9 Boyne Challenge

minimum 6 to qualify for award/ best 8 count

the series. The task of contacting potential sponsors is time consuming, let alone the follow up that can be taxing on your cell phone bill.

I am excited and pleased to announce that Red Bull and Clif Bar will sponsor the 2005 season. Hopefully you will go home with some of their fine products during the 2005 series and like them enough to continue to use them throughout your cycling career. We thank both Red Bull and Clif Bar for their support of the MMBA and the Championship Point Series.

As we work toward partnering with more companies and corporations, the MMBA Championship Point Series will be able to do more things to directly benefit our participants. The committee wants you to take home cooler swag, take advantage of more complete services at race venues and enjoy a family friendly competitive environment. All to support and continue the overall MMBA mission – to keep your trails open.

The finish line

In closing, I would like to thank those of you who love getting up at ridiculous hours on Sunday mornings to drive halfway across the state and quickly reduce yourself to a pool of sweat. Without your patronage, there would not be a need for this article. On behalf of Bob Bingham, Cris Cataldo, Cathy Needham, Craig Rice, Dennis Murphy, Shari Scurr, a special thanks to Robin Scurr (our resident secretary, chauffeur and constant voice of reason) and myself – thanks and see you at Yankee Springs... "Farmer" John Burt, MMBA CPS Director.

2005  PORTAGE
HEALTH SYSTEM

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Biking Infectious Kinetic Encephalopic Syndrome - BIKES

by Thumb Shifter

The Surgeon General of the United States is about to announce the discovery of a new emerging infectious disease associated with environmental exposure called Biking Infectious Kinetic Encephaloptic Syndrome or BIKEs for short. Many of you are all too aware of this disease and are living in shame and suffering in silence. The general public has shunned people with BIKEs for decades, but now that there is credible recognition of this disease by the medical community there is hope that the misconceptions associated with BIKEs will end. The general public must learn that people with BIKEs have been living and working along side them with little or no complications. However, this will only happen if more individuals with BIKEs come out.

In an effort to lead by example I am hereby outing myself—publicly announcing that I have BIKEs. I, in fact, have a stage three infection, the point at which the disease appears untreatable by any current medical technology or behavioral therapy. I am “coming out” because I have seen what this disease is doing to my friends and the threat it poses to their families as long as BIKEs is shrouded in fear and ignorance. Unfortunately research on this disease has been limited; as a result the infectious agent that causes BIKEs has yet to be identified by either culture based or molecular diagnostic methods making diagnosis of BIKEs difficult. Although the medical evidence is inconclusive, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has suggested that this disease is contagious, in that it spreads from person to person, and is not just contracted from environmental sources. The possibility of this disease being contagious has only added to the stigma of BIKEs. Although the modes of transmission of the disease are unknown, reasonable precautions appear to be effective at preventing the spread of BIKEs. We must inform the general public, and more importantly our families, as to how they can safely avoid contracting the disease, without avoiding contact with those who have BIKEs.

Although I am not a medical doctor, I firmly believe this disease to be contagious because, sadly, I have seen a number of my friend's spouses, and even children, acquire BIKEs. In one such example the infected spouse's condition progressed rapidly to a full-blown stage five infection in little more than a year. Had my friend been aware of the symptoms, and the potentially contagious nature of BIKEs, he could have taken precautions to prevent the transmission of the disease to his wife. Tragedies like this can be avoided. You can help prevent your family, friends and coworkers from acquiring BIKEs by letting people know you have BIKEs, and promoting awareness of the disease.

Educating the general public about this disease will be key to breaking the stigma surrounding this infection and preventing the further spread of BIKEs. Infectious disease experts have described the progression of the disease's symptoms into five stages. They also have made

recommendations for preventing the acquisition of BIKEs. You can help by learning and teaching others both the symptoms of the disease and more importantly how to avoid acquiring BIKEs.

Stage 1 infections are the most difficult to detect in that they are associated with mild symptoms, such as sore legs and a tender rump, characteristic of casual bicycle riding. However, infected individuals report an urge to continue cycling in spite of this discomfort. Only highly trained specialists should attempt to make a diagnosis at this stage of infection to avoid false positive diagnoses, as it can be quite devastating to the casual cyclist to learn that they have BIKEs.

Stage 2 infections are easier to spot. They are associated with two major symptoms: 1) the acquisition of a new mountain bike for no apparent reason, typically one with suspension mechanisms, and 2) frequent trail riding or mountain biking episodes (6 or more times per month). These episodes often occur with other individuals who have BIKEs. This is the critical stage at which the infection must be detected for there to be a chance of recovery. Stage two infections appear treatable, while stage three infections have been unresponsive to any current medical or behavioral therapy.

Stage 3 infections are categorized by various combinations of three or more of the following serious symptoms: multiple episodes per week, the purchase of a mountain bike costing in excess of \$2000, for no apparent reason, participation in mountain bike races, participation in trail maintenance and membership in support groups such as the International Mountain Biking Association (an organization which I believe is responsible for vastly accelerating the spread of this disease).

Stage 4 infections are categorized by the acquisition of multiple mountain bikes, each costing thousands of dollars, that are supposedly designed for specific types of mountain biking such as single speed, downhill, free-ride, cross-country racing or all-mountain. The ability to even distinguish such mountain bikes is a serious symptom of the disease.

Stage 5 infections are categorized by a single devastating symptom: The acquisition of training aids referred to as road bikes. These bikes are sometimes called cyclocross bikes, but this is purely denial. Should you encounter a mountain biker with one of these devices he or she is far beyond the stage at which treatment offers any hope. Such a person may be highly contagious and you should take the appropriate precautions when interacting with such a person if you should encounter them during an episode.

Although the mode by which the disease is transmitted from person to person has not been identified, the most likely candidate is contact with objects contaminated with infectious secretions such as articles of clothing or equipment. The CDC currently recommends avoiding direct contact with infected individuals or their equipment during or following an episode. However, once decontaminated by the removal of cycling apparel and showering

people with BIKES are perfectly safe to associate with, including conversation, or even hand shaking. Thus by taking precautions an uninfected person can safely interact with any mountain biker, even one with a road bike, and have a minimal risk of acquiring BIKES.

In my home we have been following these precautions to prevent my wife and children from contracting the disease. So far these precautions appear to be working as none of the major symptoms have appeared in anyone in the family beside myself. When I return home from a mountain biking episode I am not greeted cheerfully by my wife and children until following the basic decontamination procedure. Thus preventing the exposure of my family to contaminated clothing as well as potentially infectious odoriferous airborne contaminants. Additionally, under no circumstances is anyone in the family beside myself to allowed to handle the cycling equipment, especially the bikes themselves, as they are likely to be contaminated with infectious secretions.

If you happen to witness an infected person experiencing an episode, you should not be alarmed. Although what

they are doing may appear dangerous it is unlikely that they will be permanently injured. The episodes typically last one to two hours at which point the victim becomes exhausted and the episode resolves itself. Thus, there is rarely need to request emergency medical assistance. You should not attempt to assist them; this is the point at which they are most contagious.

Although the number of individuals with BIKES is growing, fear and misconceptions about people with BIKES doesn't have to. In fact, the continued ignorance about BIKES could lead to the needless spread of this disease to friends, coworkers, and family members. Please help. If you have BIKES don't continue to live in shame; come out and let people know you have BIKES, and that with the appropriate precautions you are no threat to the general public.

Do your part: Tell someone today that you have BIKES. This public service announcement was brought to you by the Michigan Mountain Biking Association, the Bent Rim Bugle and staff writer Thumb Shifter.

KISSCROSS

4 seasons of fun in western Michigan

Group rides are a little hard to come by in Mid February. Bike races are even harder. But riders and racers alike have something to be excited about in Grand Rapids. It's Kisscross! Adhering to the KISS methodology (keep it simple stupid) Rick Plite of Rockford, has been putting on affordable events in and around Grand Haven for over three years now. Kisscross started with a cyclocross series that's going strong into its fourth season. Kisscross also holds an annual metric century, ice crit, and is scheduled for its second Lance Armstrong Foundation benefit in the form of The 5 Mile Hill Climb. This is where riders get pledges from people they know and then ride this huge hill in Grand Haven for 4 hours straight! All the while earning money for cancer survivorship. The latest Kisscross production is The Lumberjack 100. A 100 mile race at Big M in northwestern lower Michigan. Most events are either \$10 to race or FREE. Founders Brewery and Slingshot Bicycle have been firmly behind Kisscross since its creation. If you'd like to find out more about the 5 Mile Climb, Lumberjack 100, or western Michigan cyclocross, log on to the web at WWW.KISSCROSS.COM for 4 seasons of fun in western Michigan and beyond!

Michigan Bike Festival

September 16-18, 2005

Downhill Racing!

Trail Rides!

Night Rides!

Live Music!

Social Bonfire!

Road Rides!

Kid's Events!

Bike Games!

Vendor Expo!

Free Camping!



A Celebration of the Bicycle!

Back for the second year in a row, this year the Michigan Bike Festival promises to be even bigger and better. Returning will be the band that was once voted the best local band in Northwestern Michigan, the Jelly Roll Blues Band. What better way to enjoy a Friday night than by hanging out by the social bonfire and listening to great music!

Saturday and Sunday promise to be busy days with organized road rides, trail rides, bike games, kid's events, trials demonstrations and more. New this year, M.E.S.S. Promotions is bringing downhill racing to Hanson Hills. If that is not enough, check out the latest bike gear at the vendor expo. Relax on Saturday night to more live music.

Proceeds support Hanson Hills and the Northern Chapter of the MMBA.

Hanson Hills Recreation Area: (888) 876-2196

For the latest information visit us on the web: www.michiganbikefestival.com

An Interview with a Founder

By Shannon Flynn

This year the MMBA selected Tom Nell as the statewide volunteer of the year. I was asked to interview him, however, I had no idea who Tom Nell was. Neither did most anyone I had a chance to ask. Why did people know so little about a guy that was getting such an important award? I spent the first hour of the annual meeting asking people if they had seen Tom

Nell, as if I knew who he was, but just couldn't find him. Finally, Todd Scott caught me, and said, "Hey Shannon, Tom Nell is sitting over there with Dan Harrison."

My uncertainty must have shown because Todd followed with, "the guy in the white shirt." In a crowd of mostly young people (I consider people about my age to be young) Tom Nell was not just a guy in a white shirt, he was an older man with heavy plastic frame glasses, wearing slacks and carrying a brief case. This was not the mountain biking trailblazer I had been expecting.

"Todd", I asked, "what's he getting the award for?" "He's been the MMBA treasurer for years," Todd answered before someone else caught his attention, leaving me to ponder just what I was going to ask this man who looked like he might be an accountant. I

introduced myself to Mr. Nell, and soon found out (once again) that looks can be deceiving. I could not have anticipated just how involved he has been in Mountain biking in Michigan from it's very beginning, and I couldn't get enough of the mountain biking history that poured out of him. We talked through half the annual meeting, including the CPS awards and the raffle, but getting to know Tom Nell was better than any raffle prize I could have won.

SF: Tom could you tell me how long you've been the MMBA treasurer, and how you got involved in the MMBA?
TN: Well, Peter O'Rourke was the first treasurer in 1990. He's one of the attorneys that started the MMBA along with John Dohan, Dwain Abramowski, Dennis Hanson and myself. I took over the treasurer duties in 1991 and I've been treasurer ever since.

SF: You helped to start the MMBA? Wow. Thanks.
TN: The other guys John, Dwain, Peter and Dennis were the main guys, but there were other people too.

SF: How long have you been involved in mountain biking?

TN: I may be only the third guy to ride Pontiac Lake. Back then they were all horse trails in the early 80s. All we had back then was Pontiac and Poto. I preferred riding Pontiac because I could ride to the trail. Eric Fisher was the guy who invited me to ride at Pontiac Lake back in 1981.

SF: What was Pontiac Lake like back then?

TN: There used to be a road going through the park. I think it was Gail road, and people used it as a dumping ground. We organized some clean up days with the DNR. They provided trailers to haul off the trash. We found couches, and other furniture, carpet, drywall, roofing shingles. It's not a through road anymore, and that seemed to stop the dumping.

SF: So the first trail work days were trash clean up?

TN: Yes, I guess they were.

SF: So what was riding like in the early 80s?

TN: Well initially we were riding cursers on dirt roads between Union Lake and Milford..

SF: When did real mountain bikes start appearing in Michigan?

TN: Well back then you couldn't buy a mountain bike you had to build them yourself. Mongoose had come out with a 26-inch BMX bike, the Kos Curser. They were supposed to be the answer to 24-inch bikes for big kids, but

they didn't sell. So in '81 we got six of these at clearance for Tom Nell Bicycles. We bent open the frame so they'd fit a five speed free wheel hub, and hung a derailleur and cables and a shifter on them. You couldn't modify the bottom bracket to convert the chain ring.

SF: A bike shop? Tell me about Tom Nell Bicycles.

TN: I'm originally from Pennsylvania. A job with GM brought me here to Detroit in 1959. I was an experimental engineer. Don't be too impressed it wasn't that exciting. In 1973 I bought a snowmobile business in Union Lake, and brought in bikes for summer business. The bikes did better. I said I'm going to use my name. I called it Tom Nell bicycles

SF: Have you always been riding?

TN: I was never a recreational rider. Most kids rode for transportation. I quit at 16 too. But I got back on them again when I started selling them in '73. I needed to know what I was selling. Would you buy a car from a guy that couldn't drive?

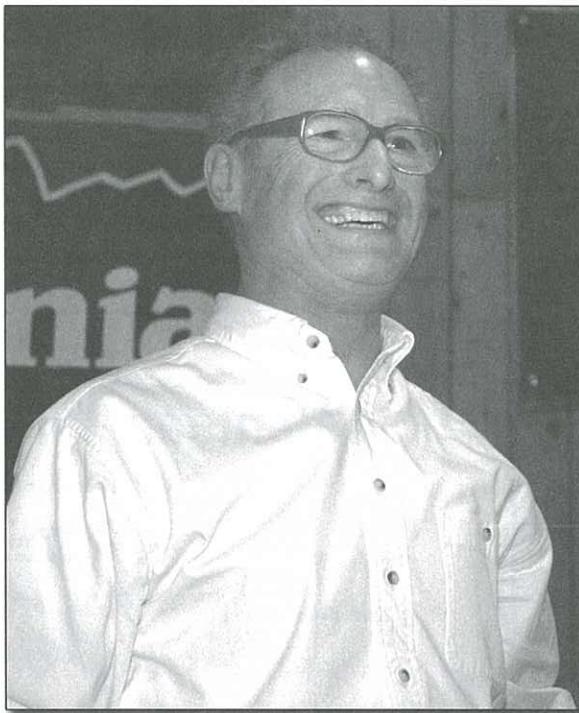


Photo by Matt McCluskey

Tom Nell at the MMBA annual meeting.

SF: I guess not. How long did you own the shop?
TN: We sold the shop in 96 and moved up north, near Traverse City.

SF: So was there any organized racing back in the 80s?
TN: The guys were racing over in Ontario before 1990. The first race in Michigan was mostly a gravel road race, the Sleeping Bear Race in 1986, and the second race was Pando in '87.

SF: Where you in these first Michigan races?
TN: I raced from '86 to 2002. After the 2002 Iceman I said 'that's it I'm done.'

SF: I love that race. How many times did you do the Iceman?
TN: I raced every Iceman till 2002. I won my class maybe half a dozen times. The 2002 Iceman was my last race. I didn't have any fun as a 65-year-old. How old are you Shannon?

SF: 38.
TN: If you broke your arm—you know the Iceman—I can't afford to break an arm. Shannon you could heal up in about six weeks. It would take me three months? I said I'm done.

SF: Did you have bad wreck that race?
TN: No, but when I look back there's so much damn adrenaline, your not hitting the brakes downhill with all that sand at the bottom—well you've got these massive pile-ups. I won my class, but I didn't have any fun. If you have to race scared, you better not do it.

SF: You still ride today, right?
TN: I haven't been back on a bike since that day. But I'm going to this summer.

SF: Wow that's amazing. Where do you think you'll ride this summer?

TN: Vasa is about the only trail we have up there.

SF: Well, if you could ride anywhere, where would you ride?

TN: Pontiac Lake! (no hesitation)

SF: Really, anywhere?
TN: Really, Pontiac Lake, and I have ridden all over the place: California, Ontario, Wisconsin, West Virginia, Colorado, Ohio and Illinois.

SF: How about some one to ride with, anyone, if you had your choice?

TN: Oh, I don't know. Garry Fisher comes to mind.

SF: If you're going to talk about Gary Fisher I have to know if you think he invented the mountain bike?

TN: You know it's like the founding of the MMBA. He was there in the beginning, but there were other people too. So

was Ritchey and those guys in Crested Butte. You know he was the guest speaker at the annual meeting a few years back. He rode the blizzard blast and it was about five below and a wind chill of nineteen below.

SF: Tom if you haven't been riding for a couple few years what's kept you involved in the MMBA?
TN: Everybody has their skill, mine is not people or events. I can add and subtract so I can keep accurate records. I actually like to pay bills. (laughing).

SF: Do you have any parting advise for the next treasurer?

TN: Now that's a loaded question. (thinks for a moment) Keep the faith. To me that means keep the MMBA financially afloat.

SF: All this history is great. I wish we had more time. I'd love to get it all down in one place.

TN: If you want the MMBA history, Shannon, what you need to do is get a fifth of Jack Daniels and a case of beer and as many of the guys that were there in the beginning. Then you'll get some history.

SF: I might just do that.

SF: So how much longer do you plan to be treasurer?

TN: Today is my last day. The new board meets today, and they will choose a new treasurer. It's time for some new blood. I'm not computer literate.

(NOTE: Shari Scurr is now the new treasurer)

Tom Nell moved up north after selling Tom Nell bicycles in 1996, and he hasn't been riding since winning his class in the 2002 Iceman, but that didn't end his involvement in the MMBA. Newer MMBA members, like myself, don't know much about him, not because he's been holed away up north, but because he has been too modest to draw attention to his own accomplishments and MMBA contributions while at the same time continually willing to do the behind the scenes work that helped make the MMBA what it is today. Meeting Tom was a real treat. Earlier in the day I'd been lucky enough to score some swag, including snagging one of dozens of water bottles that were thrown to the crowd. At the end of the day as I got into my truck to head home I noticed that the water bottle read Tom Nell Bicycles.

Thanks Tom.

I would like to thank Jason Jones for providing important background information after my interview in the form of enthusiastic support for Tom Nell as long time MMBA member and treasurer.



Chapter Chatter

Western Chapter News

The chapter has been busy with several trail initiatives in the western part of the state. Work with Kent County Parks has progressed well and we now have permission to lay a trail corridor at Luton Park (east of Rockford). Once the corridor is marked, the parks department will do a flora & fauna review. Barring any endangered species in the corridor, trail construction could begin as early as late summer or early fall. In addition, Dan Harrison will be bringing his trail school to Luton to assist in the planning for the corridor while giving valuable education time to MMBA members interested in becoming Certified Trail Designers. Trail proposals or general presentations have been made to Ottawa County Parks. Ottawa County is aggressively pursuing green-ways (mostly tied to the rivers, streams and lake systems. They have actively involved cyclists in the planning stages for these developments. The chapter will present trail proposals for a couple Ottawa County parks this spring. Interest has surfaced for implementing trails in Allegan County and the chapter is investigating whether we can link county parks with state land to create trail systems.

April 17th kicks off the mountain bike race season again in Michigan and the Western Chapter is again partnering with Tailwind Enterprises to bring you the Yankee Springs Time Trial. This annual event has the highest turnout for mountain bike racing in the state after O2S and Iceman. Come join nearly 600 racers and experience a fun and competitive event. Remember- this is a trail benefit race and a portion of the race proceeds is donated by Tailwind to the Western Chapter to buy tools, carbonite signs, etc. Chapter Volunteer of the Year John Haffenden is the Yankee Springs Trail Coordinator and point man for volunteer efforts for maintenance and the race. A list of needed help for the race will be posted soon along with Johns contact information- stay tuned to the website.

Speaking of carbonite signs- the chapter is purchasing a large quantity this spring and we hope to have them in place at Yankee by race day. Many of these trail markers get damaged or destroyed over the course of a season or two. Ned Overend visited the Grand Rapids area in February courtesy of Specialized and Village Bike Shops. Over 100 people packed into Village's Jenison location to hear Ned talk about his racing career, worst crash, training tips, and other aspects of biking. Ned exhibited a solid knowledge of cycling gear and its application for better performance. Ned also emphasized the need for advocacy for our sport, giving kudos to IMBA and the MMBA! He took questions from the audience for nearly an hour and signed copies of his book, video and posters. The proceeds of the sale of the books and videos were donated to the Western Chapter. Thanks go out to Dale and Village Bike Shops. The chapter has also contacted the purchaser of Owosso (but not yet received a response).

We are hoping to convince the new owner to continue to allow riding on the property legally. In addition, we have offered to be part of planning processes should the developer agree that trails make a great addition to any plans he may be considering. Stay tuned to the MMBA Bulletin Board and the Western Chapter website (www.westernmmba.org) as news develops.

Dennis Murphy, Chapter President

Southwest Chapter News

Okay! Okay! You know the drill. It's spring time and the urge to ride is overwhelming. Well, the trails aren't as eager as you are. And they asked me have a word with you. "Stay off the trials while they are muddy".

This is what you can do if you really want to ride single track. Plan way ahead some section of your favorite trail will thaw first and others will thaw much later. Use only the sections that are ready. Either stay on the dry and firm or stay on the wet and frozen. Riding the entire trail will piss people off. You don't want to do that, do you? Unless of course you ride early in the morning while trails are frozen. If single track is too soggy, plan on riding rural roads, linear parks, or rail to trails. Sensible use of trails will build karma.

Speaking of karma, Julie Weighman and Joe Thrasher have plenty. Julie won a \$500.00 gift certificate and Joe won a trip to the Tour de France. The annual end of winter celebration is an event hosted by Team Active of Battle Creek. The crowd is mostly roadie but all types of cycling are celebrated. This year's featured celebrity was Bob Roll. I spotted H-ball (Greg Herbold) Zap (Zapata Espanola) and Tinker (David Jaurez) in attendance as well. Back to the karma thing. I think mountain bikers do more for the trails and more to promote our sport than the solitary road riders do. Thus building karma, if there is such a thing. Joe and Julie must have had plenty to win the top prizes in a drawing this large.

Hey! What are you doing in May? The Southwest Chapter can use you at the Stampede. Contact Amy: Amy_art@hotmail.com or call 269-381-4469
Mike Needham

Holly/Flint Chapter News

Thanks to all the volunteers who showed up for the MMBA Annual Meeting setup party. The heavy work that usually takes three hours took under an hour (maybe only a half hour). There was plenty of time left over for pizza and socialization before we all left with plenty of energy to do other things with our Saturday night. What a change from past years. We'll do it again next year!

Holdridge: It seems that Holdridge has become a destination trail in the spring because people think it dries out faster than other trails in the area. It doesn't.

Please remember that the West loops of Holdridge are wet in the spring! They don't dry out any sooner than any other trail in the area. In fact, they tend to hold a bit of frost

longer, resulting in a longer wet period than many other trails in the Metro Detroit area.

March 19th will be gone by the time you read this, but it is the first Holdridge trail day of the year. Chainsaws and Chili! So far it looks like we'll have a good turnout. For the April 23, and May 21st trail days we hope to be doing some tread work, and invasive eradication along with the usual trimming. We will also be having a special event and our annual cookout on National Trails Day, June 4th. Please watch the online MMBA calendar for details.

Seven Lakes: There isn't much to report from Seven Lakes at the moment. We hope that will change soon. Watch the MMBA calendar for work days.

Ruby Campground: The Port Huron crew is getting into the swing of things at Ruby Campground with trail days scheduled for April 30th, May 14th and May 21st, and June 18th. They will be cleaning up any spring damage, finishing up some switchbacks, and adding a mile of trail during the first three trail days. Trail Coordinator Mike Liarge is also working on Trail day swaps with other chapters. This is a cool idea. We'll see how it works this year!

Are you used to working on a particular trail, are shy about showing up at trail days without people you know, but would like to go see what else is out there? See if your trail is in on the trail day swap list on the MMBA bulletin board or contact Mike, he's arranging some trail day swaps. Sounds like fun! See you on the trail!

Mary Ann Martin

Pontiac Lake Chapter News

First things first.

Your Pontiac Lake chapter officers for 2005 are:

John Burt-Pres.

Bart Wellesley-Vice Pres.

Jen Holtzclaw-Secretary

Don Cameron- Treasurer

Shari Scurr-CPS rep

Tom Clark- trail coordinator

Second mark these dates on your calendar:

April 23, 2005-Friends of Pontiac Lake general cleanup

May 14, 2005-PLRA trail day

May 22, 2005-CPS race #4 Pontiac Lake Time Trial

One thing that you should definitely look forward to is a return of a weekly chapter group ride. Our chapter seems to work in a slight vacuum until a crisis approaches, then we're hell bent for bike tubes to get it done. I'd like to meet and ride with as many of you as won't drop me by the lookout!

I have suggested to the other members of the board that we rejoin the Friends of Pontiac Lake group. This coalition of user groups is the united voice of the area and the MMBA not having an official ear within it could leave the MMBA as a whole with weaker footing. Solidarity is key to fulfilling our needs. Ed Hug has been a member of FOPL for several years and has agreed to remain our contact

with the friends group. I also suggest joining the friends group on a personal basis, as like the MMBA, the larger the role call, the louder the voice.

The DNR is set to work out their Master Plan for PLRA this year. Until this is done, the piece of singletrack that we have been dieing to build isn't going to get done. Until that day comes, I suggest we stay proactive with other projects on the trail and grounds at PLRA so that the trail is properly maintained and we remain in good light with PLRA management. Tom, Bart and myself are set to take the necessary trail certification classes to assure ourselves of readiness when the day comes. I will also suggest attending other trail days at trails in chapters surrounding us. There is a lot of work to be done on all fronts. You are Pontiac Lake Chapter members by choice.

You are MMBA members by destiny.

Questions, comments?

Send them to ponticlake@mmba.org

John Burt, - Pontiac Lake Chapter Pres.

Southeast Chapter News

Events / Group Rides:

The Southeast Chapter along with several other riding groups like the Spoke Junkies and Team Tree Farm generally host many different group rides all year long. For more information please keep an eye on the MMBA calendar as well as checking out the other sites.

<http://www.spokejunkies.com> and team

<http://www.treefarm.com>

Trail Work:

Island Lake: (ILRA)

As many of you know by now the DNR asked for our help and support with making some badly needed changes. Our volunteers stepped up and helped re-route several badly eroded section over the course of 2 weekends.

There is still plenty to do out there and the MMBA TC's will be flagging and coordinating some more re-routes during the spring for the 2005 season. Look for details on the chapter website as well as the MMBA calendar and advocacy section of the BB.

Maybury:

A handful of dedicated volunteers showed up in November and December to help create the latest re-routes at Maybury, eliminating some older trails and creating some fun new sections. Dave Poirier has flagged and been given approval for 2 more small re-routes to help eliminate the old bridges and eroded sections of old trail. The first workday is planned for Sunday April 17th starting at 9:30am. Look for details on the chapter website as well as the MMBA calendar and advocacy section of the BB.

Please note: the MTB trails at Maybury are closed until April 15th 2005 (as they are every year) Please respect the parks trail closure and refrain from riding these trails during these dates.

Lakeshore Park (AKA Novi Tree Farm):

A lot has happened over the course of the last few years,

and there is still more planned for 2005 including some small re-routes at the lost loop and minor tweaking of the existing trail system. Dave Cox is the new Trail Coordinator and Shannon Flynn is the Asst. TC. Both have been involved with the new Novi since we began bring this trail back from the dead and have been working with the city very well to maintain good communication and good working relationship. The first trail days are planned for April 2nd and 3rd 2005. The preliminary date for the second annual TTF Tree Farm Time Trial race (put on by tailwind.net) is June 2nd. Look for details on the chapter website as well as the MMBA calendar and advocacy section of the BB.

Hines Park Project:

Unfortunately there has been a small set back with this project as Wayne Co. is still dealing with Consumers Power (CP) regarding the installation of a 24" gas line, which could disturb a large section of the land we had been looking at. Our chapter has been asked to submit a new proposal with a different parcel to use for this initial trail. I am currently looking for volunteers to handle this project or even just help with some of the preliminary work.

Stony Creek:

I believe Mike Moss has been given some final approvals for the skills park at Stony Creek, he is providing some schematics and details to the managers. He is also working on approvals for adding more single track to the current trail system. The official MMBA proposal is online in the library for review. If you want to get involved please e-mail southeast@mmba.org and check the MMBA Bulletin Board for details.

Rouge Park Project:

A project headed up by Harvey Santana is progressing fast as the team is working to obtain approval to install a new multi-user trail system in Lower Rouge Park. The team includes some long time volunteers and initially progressing rather quick. Look for details as they arise on the MMBA BB or Southeast Chapter website.

<http://southeast.mmmba.org>

Hickory Glen Park (Commerce Twp.):

Jeff Shotwell has joined Tim as the Ass't. TC for Hickory Glen Park in Commerce Twp. Tim and Jeff have already flagged about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of new trail for 2005. Look for details on the chapter website as well as the MMBA calendar and advocacy section of the BB. And Keep in Mind that Commerce (HGP) drains very very well...making it an ideal spring trail.

Bald Mountain

Since George Hamzik took over as the MMBA trail coordinator in spring 2004 he has been doing a great job maintaining the trail with help from a few volunteers. But he can always use more help to keep this trail trimmed and clear for riding. George has been given preliminary approvals for "by passes" that will eliminate some poor trail conditions. He is need of some additional help to get these projects going and completed. Please e-mail myself or George if

you can help him out. tcbaldmtn@ameritech.net or southeast@mmba.org

Northern Chapter News

We have new officers in place to carry on with our mission. Jamie Green is chapter president and Dan O'Neill is the treasurer. Both bring a lot of past experiences by their former volunteer efforts for the chapter and they bring to the table some real good ideas and enthusiasm. Look for some really cool changes and growth to take place soon. Carry over projects include the hopeful nomination of the High Country Pathway as an IMBA Epic Event. This will be Michigan's first so we are all very excited to have the chance to host this event for everyone. If we receive the nomination, please come on board and help out this event by attending. Tentative scheduling looks for this in September sometime. Nothing is close to being done though. Just giving you guys a heads up.

Another project that we are very excited about is the Michigan Bike Festival. Last year's event was a success. We held the event, nobody got killed and most people seemed to have a genuine good time. This year's event will be bigger and better than last. Please watch for updates on our web site: www.michiganbikefestival.com.

Watch for our annual raffle tickets. They will be on sale very soon. We are still working on the prizes but most people like the idea of cash as a first prize. Stay tuned...

Hanson Hills will be expanding the trail system again this year. Plans are underway to have at least two hours worth of riding in a single loop throughout the property. Justin Andre is still the land manager and is as enthusiastic as ever about the upcoming riding season. We will post our trail maintenance days on the calendar and the bulletin board. They are always fun to attend. We provide food and beverage to our volunteers at every trail day. Come on up, camp out and enjoy the new trail system.

Watch for trail information on the trails link. Rail trails and snowmobile trails will be open way before the trails although the trails will be open sometime in April.
Ride On! - Eric Isaacsen aka "The Dirt Guy"

Mid-State Chapter News

Luke Pline has finished a proposal to expand the trail system at Lincoln Brick Park in Grand Ledge. This park is a lightly used area about a mile downstream from the Ledges.

We hope to present the proposal to Eaton County Park officials no later than March.

Greg Johnson established the first contact between the chapter and the county and reports that initial reaction was very positive

Burchfield Park is in the approval process for the remaining section of advanced trail. The route has been scouted

and flagged and is awaiting a walk through by park officials.

Elections:

President: Jake Pangle
Vice President: Gregg Iddings
Secretary: Harv Seeley
Treasurer: Harv Seeley
Board Representative: Jake Pangle

Trail coordinators:

Zak will remain as the Burchfield TC.
Brett Nelson has taken on the TC position for Heritage Park.
Luke Pline will remain as the lead person for the Lincoln Brick project.

New Mid-State website link:

<http://www.mmiba.org/midstate/>

Chapter related events and rides are posted to our message board which is accessible via this link or at www.onfal.com

Odds and Ends:

Gilbert Lumber has again made gracious lumber donations to the Mid-State chapter for use in the built structures at Burchfield Park. Without their donations the chapter would be responsible for the purchase of the lumber so we are extremely grateful.

If you are in Lansing visit them at:

GILBERT LUMBER COMPANY
3501 S PENNSYLVANIA AVE, LANSING, MI 48910
Phone: (517) 882-5719
The chapter also still has a few T-shirts available for sale. They come in red, green, and black contact Jake Pangle if interested jake_p5@sbcglobal.net.

Members will be meeting in Adrian regarding future Heritage Park developments.

The Mountain Kids program is starting to gear up for the 2005 season. We are currently scheduling events for schools and agencies throughout the state of Michigan. If you would like to schedule a Mountain Kids Event please send an e-mail to mountainkids@mmiba.org. The Mountain Kids program is always looking for volunteers for our spring and summer events. If you're interested in volunteering this season, keep an eye on the Volunteer section of the MMBA bulletin board. The spring and summer event schedule will be updated and posted on the MMBA board.

The program couldn't be successful without everyone's help and support. I really appreciate everyone's willingness to help and volunteer at all of our events. The experience and interactions that each kid has with all of you makes their experience one they'll never forget. - Sarah Manning, Mountain Kids Director

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(810) 632-6325
www.k2bike.com

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www.dexterbikeandsport.com

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Denny's Cycle Sports
(517) 351-2000

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www.assenmachers.com

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(989) 731-4540
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www.touringgearbicycles.com

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www.treefortbikes.com

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F.Y.I

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Want to get published in the BRB? The BRB welcomes submissions and artwork from MMBA members. This is your newsletters so send stuff! Email your story ideas, stories and photos to brb@mmmba.org. If you can't email items or have questions call Bryan Mitchell at 248-349-1937. Keep the stories short and about Michigan or Michigan Riders. Email copy in the body of the email with no formatting or better yet in a Microsoft Word document, again with no formatting.

Photo guidelines: Make sure photos are in focus, the subject is fairly close and they are interesting. Also try to make sure faces are lit well. Email photos to bryan@mitchell.com. Keep the files large. Try to send sizes of at least 5X7 at a resolution of 300ppi. (2000X2000 pixels and a file size of at least 2 mb) Email photos as JPEG attachments and don't imbed them in documents like Microsoft Word. (make sure they have .jpg at the end of the file name).

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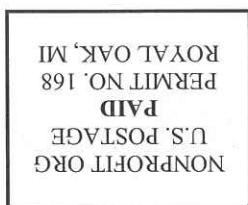
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